

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1295

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS:

SUBJ: NEW CEYLONese AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON

1. CENTRAL BANK GOVERNOR TENNEKOON TOLD AMBASSADOR JULY 14 THAT HIS SENIOR DEPUTY, DR. W.M. TILAKARATNA, WAS SLATED TO BECOME SRI LANKA'S AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, REPLACING NEVILLE KANAKARATNE. TENNEKOON UNDERSTOOD THAT TILAKARATNA, WHO NOW SERVES IN WASHINGTON AS ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR IMF, WOULD PROBABLY TAKE UP HIS AMBASSADORIAL ASSIGNMENT THIS FALL, AT WHICH TIME KANAKARATNE WOULD BECOME HIGH COMMISSIONER IN LONDON. TENNEKOON, INDICATING HE WAS MIFFED BY WAY MATTER HAD BEEN HANDLED, SAID THAT HE FIRST LEARNED OF PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT WHEN TILAKARATNE TELEPHONE FROM WASHINGTON SAYING HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY VISITING MDFA DEPUTY MINISTER JAYAKODY THAT HE WAS GSL'S CHOICE FOR AMBASSADOR.

2. BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: IN RECENT YEARS TILAKARATNE HAS SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME OUT OF COUNTRY AND EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH HIM THEREFORE
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LIMITED. FOLLOWING IS AVAILABLE BIOGRAPHIC IN-

FORMATION ON TILAKARATNA WHICH WE WILL ATTEMPT TO SUPPLEMENT WHEN AND IF CONFIRMATION RECEIVED THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REQUESTED.

3. TILAKARATNA HOLDS B.A. (CEYLON) AND PH.D. (LONDON), WITH THESIS ENTITLED "AGRICULTURAL CREDIT IN A DEVELOPMENT ECONOMY-CEYLON." APPOINTED TO STAFF OF CENTRAL BANK DURING 1950'S. AND FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF HIS PH.D. WAS ASSIGNED ON LOAN TO CEYLON PETROLEUM CORPORATION AS COMMERCIAL MANAGER AND ATTACHED TO PLANNING COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS.

4. IN AUGUST 1964 TILAKARATNA APPOINTED GENERAL MANAGER OF CEYLON TRANSPORT BOARD, TENURE PREMATURELY CONCLUDED IN JULY 1965 AS RESULT OF HEATED DISPUTE WITHHREW UNITED NATIONAL PARTY GOVERNMENT OVER TILAKARATNA'S ALLEGED ACQUIESCENCE IN USE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES FOR MRS. BANDARANAIKE'S FOLLOWING DURING RECENTLY CONCLUDED GENERAL ELECTION. TILAKARATNA RESIGNED FROM CTB AFTER UNP-DIRECTED UNIONS EXERTED HEAVY PRESSURE ON GOVERNMENT. AT TIME OF RESIGNATION TILAKARATNA ALLEGEDLY CRITICIZED NEW SENANAYAKE GOVERNMENT AS "UN-PROGRESSIVE." TILAKARATNA RETURNED TO CENTRAL BANK, SUCCEEDING GAMANI COREA AS DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH. IN THAT CAPACITY TILAKARATNA SERVED AS ADVISOR TO GOVERNMENT ON MATTERS PERTAINING TO MONETARY POLICY AND TOOK ON PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR BANK'S ANNUAL REPORT. HE IS NOW SENIOR DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF CENTRAL BANK, AND SERVES AS ALTERNATE IMF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR INDIA, BANGLADESH, AND SRI LANKA.

5. TILAKARATNA IS SHORT, AND RATHER HEAVY, AND WEARS THICK GLASSES. HE IS INTELLIGENT, COMPETENT, COMFORTABLE WITH FACTS AND FIGURES, AND FRIENDLY. AS DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, HE SEEMED MORE RELUCTANT THAN OTHER OFFICIALS IN HIS DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, TO DISCUSS CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS, HE IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GOIGAMA CASTE SENGHALESE BUDDHIST AND MARRIED.
VAN HOLLEN

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Message Attributes

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